

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 were pending. This Amendment presents changes to claims 1-13 and cancels claims 14 and 15. Accordingly, claims 1-13 are presented and at issue.

1. Claim Objection

The Examiner objected to claim 11 because this claim was drafted to depend on itself. This was a typographical error. Accordingly, claim 11 has been corrected to depend from claim 9, as originally intended, instead of claim 11.

2. Claim Rejections - 35 USC 112

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-13 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. More specifically, it was not clear whether claims 1-13 were directed to a method or to a system. Accordingly, claims 1-13 have been clarified to refer to methods, and not to systems.

The Examiner noted that the phrase "the shared transmission medium" in line 15 of claim 1 lacked antecedent basis. Line 4 of Claim 1 has been corrected to provide proper antecedent basis. Moreover, Applicant performed a complete review of all pending claims, in order to eliminate potential sources of ambiguity, and to more particularly claim the novel aspects of Applicant's invention. It is submitted that all pending claims now meet the requirements of 35 USC 112.

3. Claim Rejections - 35 USC 103

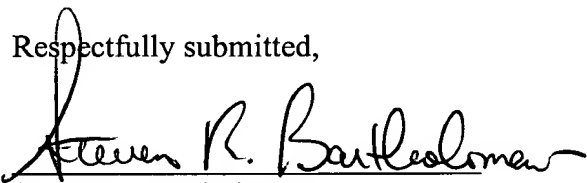
The Examiner observed that the application names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 USC 103(a), the Examiner is correct in presuming that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made.

The Examiner rejected Claims 14 and 15 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishino (U.S. Patent No. 5,581,651) in view of McCoskey (U.S. Patent No. 4,178,823). Claims 14 and 15 have been cancelled.

4. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner indicated that claims 1-13 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejections under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. As stated above, claims 1-13 have been amended to meet all applicable requirements of 35 USC 112. Accordingly, it is submitted that claims 1-13 are now in allowable form. Moreover, Applicant has cancelled all remaining claims (namely, claims 14 and 15) which the Examiner had indicated were not allowable. Accordingly, all pending claims of the present application are allowable, and such action by the Examiner is earnestly solicited. If, however, there are any unresolved issues, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number given below.

Dated: August 8, 2001

Respectfully submitted,


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